all was that by the suddenness and unexpectedness of his attacks Nivelle had won these triumphs at a low price in casualties. A country desolated and darkened by the sacrifice of Verdun and by the mournful butcheries of Artois, Champagne and the Somme, hailed the appearance of this *French* new leader as they would a deliverer.

TorMveUe Public opinion in France was worked up to a pitch of exultation, and was prepared to welcome any plan that emanated from the brain of such a General. When, therefore, there were carefully disseminated rumours that he had a fresh plan and a fresh method for breaking through the German ramparts and driving the hated invader in headlong rout from the soil of France, the demand that this new plan should be at once tried became irresistible. I had noted the change when I met the cautious Ribot at the London Conference, near the end of December. When a few days later I travelled with the French Delegation to Rome,

Briandand I found the fermentation had touched

united to M' Briand and M- Albert Thomas, who *offensive in* had always hitherto been confirmed be-*the West* lievers in the " way round." They had both been accustomed to talk with derision of the expectations of the two G.H.Q/s that "this time a break-through was inevitable." I was therefore

astonished to witness the change that had taken place in their attitude, for now they were ardent advocates of another great offensive on the Western Front, with a view to a rupture of the German line. I have already quoted a passage from M. Briand's speech at the Rome Conference, in which he showed clearly that his change of mind was attributable to the confidence which had been engendered by the Verdun